

STORIES FROM SHAKESPEARE

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STORIES FROM SHAKESPEARE

(FOR CLASS VIII)

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PREFACE

An attempt has been made in this book to present, in a simple and attractive manner, three of the most popular plays of Shakespeare. The story-interest has been fully maintained and the well-known utterances in the plays, that are on everybody's lips, have been incorporated into the narrative, with due regard for the standard for which this Rapid Reader is meant.

Short, easy-flowing sentences, made up of a rigidly limited number of familiar words, have been employed all through.

An earnest effort has been made to give the young learners of English some taste of the original Shakespeare along with their enjoyment of the stories.

P. K. Guha

Sura-Sadma
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29. 11. '64

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The Merchant of Venice

There was, in Venice, a great merchant, named Antonio. He was a kind-hearted man. He used to lend money, without interest, to people in distress. He was, therefore, loved and respected by all in Venice.

But there was one man in Venice who hated Antonio. He was Shylock, the Jew. Shylock was a money-lender. He bitterly hated Antonio. Antonio used to lend money without interest. This brought down the rate of interest in the money-market of Venice. Antonio thus stood in the way of Shylock's money-making. Shylock was, therefore, angry with Antonio. He had a great greed for money. He hated Antonio for another reason: Antonio was a Christian and he hated the Jews. He used to insult Shylock. He spat on Shylock's Jewish dress and called him a cut-throat dog. Shylock, therefore, bore a deep grudge against Antonio.

Antonio had a bosom friend, named Bassanio. Antonio used to help Bassanio with money, whenever he was in need of it. Now, it so happened that Bassanio required urgently a fairly large sum of money. He had met Portia, a rich heiress in Belmont. Sometimes, from her eyes, he received 'speechless messages' of love.

He now wanted to go to Belmont to seek Portia's hand in marriage. He needed money to go to Belmont as a worthy suitor for the wealthy Portia. Antonio said that he had no money in hand at the time. He asked Bassanio to obtain a loan from a money-lender, with Antonio as surety.

Bassanio went to Shylock for the loan. He asked for a loan of three thousand ducats, for three months, with Antonio as surety. Shylock did not agree at once. He said that he should like to speak with Antonio. Antonio, who knew that Bassanio had gone to Shylock for the loan, came to Shylock's house, that very moment. Shylock felt happy to have Antonio at his house as a suitor for money. He said to himself: "If I can catch him once upon the hip, I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him."

Shylock felt that he had caught his great enemy in his trap. He wished to take full revenge on him.

Antonio told Shylock that he never lent money on interest. But, to meet the urgent need of his friend, he would break a custom. He asked Shylock to lend him three thousand ducats, for three months, on interest.

Shylock had already formed a wicked plan in his mind. He wished to use this loan as a means of killing Antonio. With a show of the utmost friendliness, Shylock told Antonio that he would lend him the money without interest;



Antonio came to Shylock's house.

only, Antonio would sign 'a merry bond' promising to give a pound of his flesh, if he failed to repay the money in three months. Antonio took it as a joke and readily agreed. Besides, he knew that all his ships would come back to port soon and he would surely be able

to repay the money in time. But the loving heart of Bassanio suspected in this an evil design of Shylock. He forgot his need for money and, like a true friend, told Antonio: "You shall not seal to such a bond for me: I'll rather dwell in my necessity."

Antonio assured Bassanio:

"Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it:
Within these two months, that is, a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond."

Antonio signed the bond. He believed that the Jew had really turned king. But Bassanio's mind was full of fear. He said:

"I like not fair words and a foul mind."

Portia, whom Bassanio wished to marry, was the only child of her father. He had left her a great fortune. At the time of his death he made a will which gave a direction to Portia about her marriage; there would be three caskets, one gold, one silver and the other lead. She would marry that suitor who would choose, out of these three caskets, that casket which contained Portia's picture. Portia was a devoted

daughter and she was resolved to carry out the wishes of her father. But she felt keenly this check on her own wishes in the matter of her marriage. She said, in sorrow, to her maid, Nerissa :

"I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none ?"

Nerissa assured Portia by telling her : "Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men at their death, are inspired by God ; therefore, at this lottery of caskets, it is only the true lover who will choose the right casket. He will understand the meaning of what is written on each of the three caskets."

On the gold casket was written :

"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire."

The silver casket bore on it the words :

"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."

The lead casket had these words engraved on it :

"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."

Suitors for Portia flocked to Belmont from all parts of the world. But they failed, one

after another. They came, tempted by Portia's fortune, and they, therefore, chose either the gold or the silver casket. Both these caskets promised to give. None were drawn to the lead casket that threatened to take away all that the suitor had. Bassanio, however, chose the lead casket and found Portia's portrait in it. He won the hand of Portia who was full of joy, for she had been strongly attracted by Bassanio. The threat of the lead casket drew Bassanio to it. He had come in the spirit of a true lover. The true lover is always ready to give all he has for the sake of love.

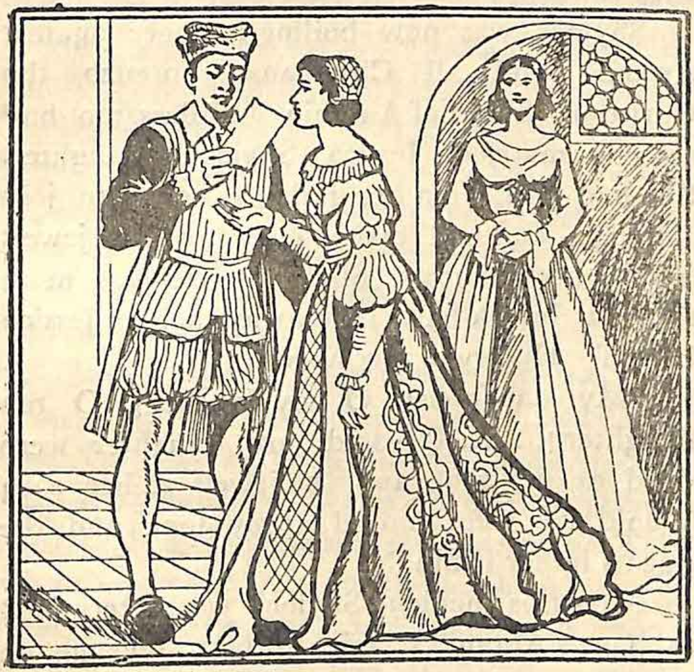
But Bassanio's joy was shattered by a letter from Antonio that came just then. The letter ran as follows :

"Sweet, Bassanio, my ships have all gone astray ; the state of my funds is very low. I cannot repay the loan from the Jew. The time for paying back has passed. I have to pay the penalty mentioned in the bond. Since, in paying it, it is impossible for me to live, I should like to see you at my death. But do as you please : If your love do not induce you to come, let not my letter."

Bassanio read the letter to Portia. He told her what he owed to that great friend, who was

going to lose his life for his sake. Portia was deeply moved. She asked Bassanio: "What sum does he owe to the Jew?"

Bassanio replied: "For me, three thousand ducats."



Portia asked Bassanio: "What sum does he owe to the Jew?"

Portia said: "What, no more? Pay him six thousand and tear off the bond. Double six thousand, and then multiply that amount

by three, before a friend of this kind shall lose a hair for my Bassanio's fault."

Portia and Bassanio then went to the church and were married. Along with them was married Gratiano, Bassanio's companion, with Nerissa, Portia's maid.

Shylock was now boiling in anger against Antonio and all Christians. Lorenzo, the Christian, friend of Antonio and Bassanio had secretly married Jessica, Shylock's daughter. She had fled from her father's house to join Lorenzo, and had taken away precious jewels and plenty of ducats. Shylock's grief was more for what Jessica had taken away than for Jessica herself. His cry of sorrow was :

"My daughter ! O my ducats ! O my daughter !.........I would, my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear ! Would she were buried at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin !"

After this incident Shylock was determined to have Antonio's life, to take revenge on Christians. He was now bent on exacting the penalty of Antonio's pound of flesh.

Bassanio and Gratiano went from Belmont to Venice to attend Antonio's trial.

As soon as they left, Portia sent a messen-

ger, with a letter, to a great lawyer, Doctor Bellario, who was her cousin. She asked for his legal advice for the case. She suggested that she herself might go to court as a Barrister, and asked for his lawyer's dress. It so happened that when Portia's messenger was with Doctor Bellario, he received a letter from the Duke of Venice, requesting him to come to Venice and conduct Shylock's case against Antonio. Doctor Bellario sent his advice and clothes to Portia. He also sent the following letter for the Duke, to be handed by Portia to the Duke in court:

"I would inform Your Grace that, at the time of my receipt of your letter, I am very sick; but when your letter came, there was with me a young Barrister from Rome. I told him what this case between Shylock and Antonio was. We turned over many law books together. I have told him my opinion of the case. This will be improved by his learning, which is really great. At my request, he will go, in my place, to keep Your Grace's request to me. I never know so young a body with so old a head."

Now takes place the trial of Antonio in the court of the Duke of Venice. Portia, in male disguise, comes dressed like a Barrister, to conduct the case. She comes in place of

Doctor Bellario whom the Duke had requested to come to conduct the trial. Portia comes with Doctor Bellario's letter to the Duke. Portia's maid, Nerissa, comes, also in male disguise, dressed like Portia's clerk. Neither Bassanio nor Gratiano could recognize Portia and Nerissa.

Bassanio cheered up Antonio saying :

"Good cheer, Antonio ! What, man, courage yet !
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Before you will lose for me one drop of blood."

Shylock was sharpening his knife on the sole of his shoes ; Gratiano told Shylock :

"Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, cruel Jew,
Thou makest thy knife keen."

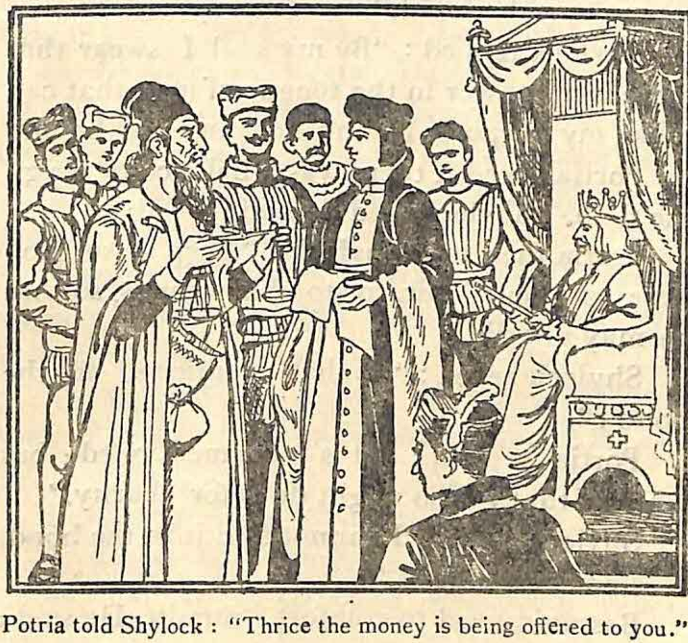
Portia asked Antonio if he admitted that he had signed that bond. He said he had. On this Portia said : Then must the Jew be merciful."

Shylock cried out : "Who can compel me to be merciful ? Tell me that."

Portia said : "No one compels a person to be merciful. Mercy drops from the heart as naturally a rain pours down from the sky. Mercy is a source of double joy : it gives joy both to the person who shows mercy and to

him who receives it. We all need the mercy of God. We should, therefore, show mercy in all our deeds."

Shylock replied that he had nothing to do with mercy. He only wanted the penalty that was due to him under the law. He did not care for anything except his bond.



Potria told Shylock : "Thrice the money is being offered to you."

Portia then wanted to see the bond and Shylock eagerly handed it to her. Portia told Shylock : "Shylock, thrice the money is being offered to you."

Shylock said : "An oath, an oath ! I have taken an oath, in the name of God, that I shall exact the penalty. Shall my soul be a traitor to God ? No, not even if I were offered the whole of Venice."

Portia again asked Shylock to be merciful and told him : "Take thrice thy money and let me tear the bond."

Shylock replied : "By my soul I swear that there is no power in the tongue of man that can shake my purpose. I stand here on my bond."

Portia asked if there was a balance to weigh the flesh. Shylook said he had it ready.

Portia then told Shylock : "Keep a surgeon here, at your cost, to stop his wounds, so that he may not die."

Shylock asked : "Is that mentioned in the bond ?"

Portia replied : "It is not mentioned ; but what of that ? You might do it for charity."

Shylock said : "I cannot find it in the bond. It is not in the bond."

Bassanio tried to comfort Antonio. He said : "Antonio, my wife is as dear to me as life itself. But I would lose even her, to save you from the hands of this devil."

Portia, knowing full well that her husband

did not recognise her, had a joke over it: "Your wife would give you little thanks, if she were here and heard you make this offer."

Gratiano said: "I wish my wife were in heaven, if she could have there the help of the gods to change the mind of this dog of a Jew."

Nerissa, the wife of Gratiano, had now a joke like her mistress: "It is good you say this behind your wife's back. The wish would otherwise make an unquiet house."

Shylock cried out: "So heartless are these Christian husbands! I have a daughter! How I wish a robber or a thief had been my son-in-law instead of a Christian!"

Turning to Portia Shylock said: "We are wasting time. I pray you, pronounce the sentence."

Portia said: "A pound of that merchant's flesh is yours. The court awards it and the law allows it."

Shylock at once cried out in joy:

"A Daniel come to judgment! Most learned judge! What an excellent sentence! Come, prepare!"

Portia said: "Wait a little: there is something else. This bond gives you no blood. The words clearly are 'a pound of flesh': then take

your pound of flesh. But if, in cutting it, you shed a single drop of blood, your entire wealth and property will be lost to you and will come over to the state of Venice."

Gratiano cried out: "O excellent judge! Mark, Jew. O learned judge!"

Shylock was amazed and said: "I take this offer then: pay me thrice the sum and let the Christian go."

Bassanio offered the money at once. Portia said: "Soft! No haste. The Jew shall have nothing but the penalty."

Gratiano cried out: "O Jew! a just judge! a learned judge."

Portia said to Shylock: "Therefore, prepare to cut off the flesh. Do not shed any blood. Cut neither less nor more than an exact pound of flesh. If the scale turns by the weight of even a hair, you die and all your property comes to the state."

Gratiano exclaims: "A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew! Now, villain! I have you on the hip!"

Portia said: "Why does the Jew pause? Take your penalty."

Shylock said: "Give me my principal, and let me go."

Bassanio said: "I have it ready, for you; here it is."

Portia said: "He has refused it in the open court; he shall have merely the penalty due to him on the bond."

Gratiano cried out: "A Daniel! a second Daniel! I thank you, Jew, for teaching me that word."

Portia told Shylock: "The law has another hold on you. If it is proved that a foreigner wants to take the life of a citizen of Venice, his entire property is lost to him: one-half goes to the person he wanted to kill and the other half comes to the state. It has been clearly proved that you wanted to take the life of Antonio; so, half your property now belongs to Antonio and the other half comes to the state. The offender's life lies at the mercy of the Duke."

The Duke said that to show how kind-hearted the Christians were, he pardoned Shylock's life before he asked for it.

Antonio said that he would allow Shylock to enjoy that half of his property which Antonio could claim; but he would let Shylock have it on one condition: it would come, after his death, to his daughter Jessica and son-in-law Lorenzo.

Shylock agreed and went away, a crushed and broken-hearted man.

When the court rose, Bassanio offered to Portia the sum of three thousand ducats that was due to the Jew. Portia declined the offer. Bassanio then asked her to accept some present as a mark of their gratitude. Portia asked for Bassanio's ring. Bassanio said that he would keep that ring and give Portia the most valuable ring in Venice. Portia pretended to be annoyed and said: "I see, sir, you are liberal in offers. You taught me first to beg, and now it seems, you teach me how a beggar should be answered."

Bassanio told Portia:

"Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;
And, when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should never sell nor give nor lose it."

Portia said:

"That excuse saves many men to save their gifts.
If your wife be not a mad-woman,
And knows how well I have deserved the ring,
She would not be your enemy for ever,

For giving it to me. Well, peace be
with you."

So saying she went away.

Antonio told Bassanio : "My good Bassanio, let him have the ring. Let what he has done for us and my love for you be valued by you above your wife's command."

Bassanio felt ashamed and asked Gratiano to run with the ring and give it to Portia. He did so. Nerissa took, from Gratiano, Gratiano's wedding ring, as her present as Portia's clerk.

Then came the happy meeting of all at Portia's house in Belmont. Portia and Nerissa were now in their own clothes. Portia warmly welcomed Antonio to her house. Their joy was increased by the fun of a quarrel over the rings. Nerissa started the quarrel accusing Gratiano of faithlessness to her. She insisted that he had given the ring to a woman and not to a man. Portia followed, with her quarrel with Bassanio, and told him : "By heaven, I will never be your wife until I see the ring."

Nerissa echoed her mistress by telling Gratiano :

"Nor I be yours,
Till I again see mine."

Portia continued the joke :

"Nerissa teaches me what to believe :
I will die if some woman had not the ring."

Antonio was pained to think that he was the unhappy cause of this quarrel between his friend and his wife. He told Portia : "I once made my body a surety in a loan for Bassanio. Had it not been for the person, who took his ring, my body would have gone. I now make my soul a guarantee that your husband will never break his faith with you again.

Portia said : "Then you shall be his surety. Give him this ring, and tell him to keep it more carefully than the other."

Antonio gave the ring to Bassanio and asked him to swear to keep it.

Bassanio exclaimed : "By heaven ! it is the same I gave the Barrister !"

Portia said : "You are all astonished. It was Portia who was the Barrister and Nerissa was the Barrister's clerk. Antonio, I have better news for you : three of your ships, with a rich store of goods, have safely come to port."

Antonio said : "Sweet lady, you have given me life and living."

Gratiano said :

"Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing
So much as keeping safe Nerissa's ring."

Meaning of some words and expressions :

lend—ধার দেওয়া। interest—সুদ। distress—দুঃখ-দারিদ্র্য। bitterly—ঘৃণাপূর্ণভাবে, উগ্রভাবে। brought down—নামাইয়া দিয়াছিল। rate—হার। greed—ধনলালসা। spat on—থুথু ফেলিত। grudge—আক্রোশ। bosom – অন্তরঙ্গ। fairly – যথোচিত ভাবে। heiress—উত্তরাধিকারিণী। messages—ভাববাণী, বার্তা। worthy suitor—যোগ্য প্রণয়প্রার্থী ; অর্থপ্রার্থী বা আবেদনকারী। loan—কর্জ, ধার। surety—জামিন অর্থাৎ অন্যের ঋণ শোধ করিবার জন্য দায়ী। ducat—প্রাচীন ইউরোপের প্রায় ছয় টাকা পঁচিশ পয়সা মূল্যের স্বর্ণমুদ্রা। catch upon the hip—বাগে বা কায়দায় পাওয়া। I will feet fat...bear him—তাহার প্রতি আমার বহুকালের আক্রোশ সম্পূর্ণভাবে মিটাইব। trap—ফাঁদ। revenge—প্রতিশোধ। wicked—দুরভিসন্ধিপূর্ণ। merry bond—শুধু আমাদের জন্য রচিত চুক্তিপত্র। joke—ঠাট্টা, রসিকতা। readily—তৎক্ষণাৎ। seal—সীল মারা বা দস্তখত করা। forfeit—বাজেয়াপ্ত করা। expires—শেষ হওয়া। will—উইল বা দানপত্র। casket—ছোট বাক্স বা কৌটা। keenly—অতি আগ্রহের সহিত। inspire—অনুপ্রাণিত হওয়া। engraved—খোদাই করা বা ছাপ দেওয়া ছিল। hazard—সংকটে বা ঝুঁকিতে ফেলা। flocked—দলবদ্ধ হইল। tempted—প্রলুব্ধ হইয়া। portrait—ছবি। shattered—চূর্ণ-বিচূর্ণ বা ধ্বংস হইল। go astray—বিপথগামী হওয়া। penalty—চুক্তিভঙ্গের জন্য শাস্তি। induce—প্রণোদিত করা। multiply—গুণ করা বা পূরণ করা। coffiin—শবাধার বা খাটিয়া। incident—

ঘটনা। exacting—বলপূর্বক আদায় করা। legal—আইন সম্বন্ধীয়। conduct—পরিচালনা করা। Grace—ডিউকের সম্ভ্রমসূচক উপাধি। disguise—ছদ্মবেশ। charge—কোন কাজের ভার বা দায়িত্ব। trial—বিচার। recognize—চিনিতে পারা। cheered—আনন্দিত বা উৎফুল্ল করিল। sole—জুতার তলা। keen—ধারাল। merciful—সদয়, দয়ালু। compel—কোন কাজ করিতে বাধ্য করা। drops—ফোঁটায় ফোঁটায় পড়ে। pours—মুষলধারে পড়ে। concern—সম্বন্ধ বা স্বার্থ। oath—শপথ। exact—অধিকারস্বরূপ দাবি করা। traitor—বিশ্বাসঘাতক। balance—দাঁড়িপাল্লা; নিক্তি। surgeon—অস্ত্রচিকিৎসক। charity—বদান্যতা। sacrifice—উৎসর্গ করা। devil—নরাধম, পাজি। offer—অর্পণ,প্রদান। unquiet—উৎকণ্ঠিত, অস্থির। pronounce—রায় দেওয়া। sentence—দণ্ডাজ্ঞা। A Daniel come to judgment—স্বয়ং ধর্মরাজ বিচার করিতে আসিয়াছেন। shed—ঝরান, ঢালা। drop—ফোঁটা। entire—সমস্ত বা ষোল আনা। amazed—হতবুদ্ধি হইল। soft—(এখানে *Interjection*) একটু থাম, চুপ কর। scale—দাঁড়িপাল্লার ওজন। villain—পাজি, বদমাস। pause—থামা, দেরি করা। principal—আসল টাকা, মূলধন। foreigner—বিদেশী। offender—দোষী, অপরাধী। crushed—নিষ্পেষিত। declined—অস্বীকার (বা অগ্রাহ্য) করিল। pretend—ভান (বা বাহানা) করিল। annoyed—ত্যক্ত ও বিরক্ত হওয়া। liberal—দানশীল, উদার। offer—দানেরপ্রস্তাব। vow—ধর্মসাক্ষী করিয়া প্রতিজ্ঞা করা। excuse—অজুহাত, ছুতা। wedding ring—বিবাহকালে কন্যাকে যৌতুক দেওয়া

আঙ্‌টি। fun—কৌতুক, তামাসা। accusing—অভিযুক্ত করিয়া, বকা দিয়া। insisted—পীড়াপীড়ি করিয়া বলিল। echoed—প্রতিধ্বনি করিয়া বলিল। soul—আত্মা। guarantee—প্রতিভূ, জামিন।

Exercises

I. *Answer the following questions in complete sentences :*

(*a*) Who was Antonio ?

(*b*) Who was Bassanio ?

(*c*) Who was Shylock ?

(*d*) Why did Shylock and Bassanio hate each other ?

(*e*) Why did Bassanio require a large some of money ?

(*f*) How did Antonio borrow money from Shylock ?

(*g*) How could Bassanio win Portia ?

(*h*) What news came to spoil the joy of Bassanio and Portia ?

(*i*) What did Portia do to help Antonio ?

(*j*) What did Shylock claim ?

(*k*) How did Portia conduct the case ?

(*l*) What did Shylock want when his claim was refused.

(*m*) What was the final judgment against him ?

II. *Fill in the blank spaces with suitable words taken from the list below :—*

interest, grudge, money, revenge, joke, will, astray, owe, mercy.

(*a*) At the time of his death he made a — .

(*b*) Antonio used to lend money without — .

(*c*) I will feed fat the ancient — I bear him.

(*d*) Shylock wished to take full — on Antonio.

(*e*) Antonio took it as a — and readily agreed.

(*f*) Shylock told Antonio that he would lend him — without interest.

(*g*) My ships have all gone — .

(*h*) What sum does he — to the Jew ?

(*i*) — is a source of double joy.

III. *Complete the following sentences :—*

(*a*) Shylock did not agree at — .

(*b*) Shylock felt that he had caught his great enemy in his — .

(*c*) He would surely be able to repay the money in — .

(*d*) I'll rather dwell in my — .

(*e*) Holy men, at their death, are inspired by — .

(*f*) Shylock cried out in — .

IV. *Fill in each blank space with the right word from the brackets :—*

(*a*) Shylock was angry — Antonio (at, with)

(*b*) He had no money — hand. (on, in)

(*c*) Bassanio's mind was full — fear. (with, of)

(*d*) It is impossible — me to live. (for, to)

(*e*) Tear — the bond, (off, away)

(*f*) Mercy drops from the heart as naturally as rain pours — from the sky. (up, down)

Macbeth

Long, long ago, there was in Scotland an old King, named Duncan. He had two sons,—Malcolm and Donalbain. The King had two generals, Macbeth and Banquo.

There was a rebellion against King Dancan.



Macbeth killed Macdonwald, the leader of the rebel army.

The rebels were led by Macdonwald. They got up a large army, and the country was in great danger. The two generals, Macbeth and Banquo, went to the field to fight for the king.

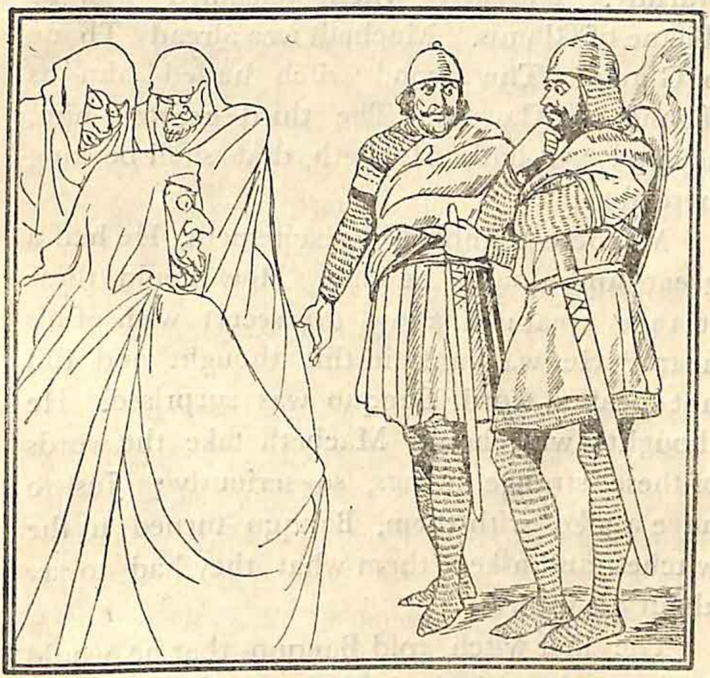
At first the rebel army seemed to be winning. But the brave Macbeth turned the tide. He killed Macdonwald, and, single-handed, destroyed many of his soldiers. The rest fled away.

But there was a fresh danger. The King's tired soldiers were faced by the army of a foreign foe—the King of Norway. He was being secretly helped by a treacherous Scottish Lord, the Thane of Cawdor. But now too, Macbeth was the victor. He met the King of Norway, face to face, and forced him to yield. The army of Norway was dispersed.

The news of the battle was brought to the King. He was full of wrath against the traitor, the Thane of Cawdor. He gave orders that this Thane of Cawdor should be executed immediately. He also commanded that the title 'Thane of Cawdor' should now be conferred on Macbeth. He sent Ross and Angus as messengers to meet Macbeth, when he would be returning from the battle-field. He directed them to greet Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor.

Macbeth and Banquo were on their way back. They had not yet met Ross and Angus. The two generals suddenly saw before them three strange figures. They were lean and worn-out and wildly dressed. They did not look like

natural human beings. They had the appearance of women, but they had beards. These were witches. They had a strange power of



Macbeth and Banquo saw three witches before them.

telling what would happen to a man in future. These three witches were waiting to meet Macbeth, when he would be returning at the end of the battle.

Banquo first spoke to them and asked them

who they were. They kept quiet.

But when Macbeth said to them, 'Speak, if you can : what are you ?' they greeted him warmly. The first witch welcomed him as Thane of Glamis. Macbeth was already Thane of Glamis. The second witch hailed him as Thane of Cawdor. The third greeted him, saying : "All hail, Macbeth, that shall be king hereafter !"

Macbeth trembled in excitement. He had a great ambition to be king. How could these strange creatures know this secret wish of his heart ? He was sunk in this thought and did not speak a word. Banquo was surprised. He thought : why should Macbeth take the words of these strange beings, so seriously ? Just to have a joke with them, Banquo turned to the witches and asked them what they had to say about his future.

The first witch told Banquo that he would be 'lesser than Macbeth, and greater'; the second witch said that he would be 'not so happy, yet much happier' ; and the third witch told him : "Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none." The third witch meant that Banquo would not be king himself, but he would be the father of a line of kings.

Macbeth woke up from his deep thought. He commanded the witches to say more. What they had said was not clear. But the witches did not say anything more and vanished.

Just then Ross and Angus met Macbeth and Banquo. Ross told Macbeth that the King had heard, with great joy, the news of his success at the battle. He also told Macbeth that the King had directed them to call him Thane of Cawdor.

Banquo was surprised and said within himself: "What ! can the devil speak true ?"

Macbeth told Ross that the Thane of Cawdor was alive and asked how his title could come to him.

Ross replied that the present Thane of Cawdor would be put to death, as a traitor, for his secret help to the king of Norway.

Macbeth again was in deep thought. The witches surely knew his future; they said he would be Thane of Cawdor, and he had become Thane of Cawdor; from this he might well hope that he would be king: the witches had said that he would be 'king hereafter.'

Macbeth would now, rest on this hope; he would do nothing about it. At one time he had thought of murdering Duncan, if necessary, to be king. But now he dropped that idea. He

expected that the King would himself name Macbeth as his successor to the throne. Kingship in Scotland did not then always pass from father to son. The present King used to name his successor by giving him the title, 'The Prince of Cumberland.' Macbeth hoped that when he would meet the King, he would be given the title 'The Prince of Cumberland.'

The King received Macbeth most cordially and was full of praise for him. He said to him : "More is thy due than more than all can pay."

Macbeth was now hoping that after this high praise, the king would call him 'The Prince of Cumberland.' But instead of doing so, Duncan gave out that his eldest son, Malcolm would be named from then 'The Prince of Cumberland.'

This took away Macbeth's chance of becoming king without any efforts on his own. His old idea of killing Duncan, in order to be king, came back to his mind.

Macbeth deeply loved his wife. She, too, was greatly devoted to her husband. Macbeth used to speak to Lady Macbeth about his strong desire to be king. He told her that, if necessary, he would kill Duncan, for winning the throne. Lady Macbeth heard, with sym-

pathy, these words of her husband. She felt that he would not be happy if he could not be king. She thought that, as a loving wife, it was her duty to help her husband to be happy in life.

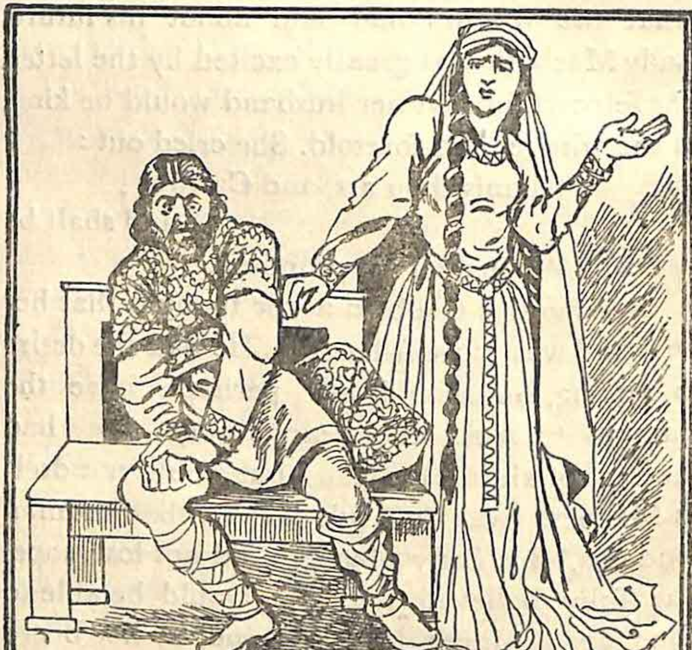
Soon after Macbeth had met the witches he wrote a letter to Lady Macbeth. He told her what the witches had said about his future. Lady Macbeth was greatly excited by the letter. She felt certain that her husband would be king, as the witches had foretold. She cried out :

"Glamis thou art, and Cawdor ;
and shalt be
What thou art promised."

But she was troubled at the thought that her husband was too soft-hearted. He had the desire to be king, but would not, perhaps, have the courage to 'take the nearest way' ; he had thought of killing Duncan, but would not do it as Macbeth was 'too full of the milk of human kindness.' But Lady Macbeth did not lose hope. She fully believed that she would be able to pour her courage into his mind, by her brave words.

In order to honour Macbeth, King Duncan came to visit Macbeth's castle at Inverness. This offered a chance to Macbeth to kill Duncan. It was now the only way in which

he could win the crown. Lady Macbeth encouraged her husband to carry out the plan that was in his mind. Often had he spoken about it to his wife. Most unexpectedly Duncan was now in his house. But Macbeth hesitated to kill the old, innocent King. He thought he



Lady Macbeth rebuked her husband.

must not do such a vile deed. Duncan was his guest and he had shown many a favour to Macbeth.

Macbeth told his wife that they should proceed no further in that business.

Lady Macbeth rebuked him sharply. She called him a coward. He had a strong desire to have the crown, but lacked the courage to do what was needed for it. She mocked him for his not doing what he had resolved to do. She said that if she resolved to dash out the brains of her sucking baby, she would do even that. She would not break her promise. She asked her husband to leave it all in her hands. She said she would do the deed herself. Macbeth fell under his wife's magic spell and agreed to the murder of Duncan.

Lady Macbeth went into the chamber of the sleeping Duncan to kill him. But she failed to do it. It seemed to her that the sleeping Duncan looked like her father!

Most unwillingly and full of doubts and fears, Macbeth went in to do the cruel deed. He did it and came out like a mad man. He told his wife that after the murder, he heard a voice cry: "Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep, Macbeth shall sleep no more."

By mistake Macbeth had brought out the daggers. They were to be put into the hands of the sleeping body-guards to show that they

were the murderers. Lady Macbeth asked her husband to go in again and put the daggers in the hands of the guards.

Macbeth said : "I will go no more. I am afraid to think of what I have done. I dare not look on it again."

Lady Macbeth entered the chamber, and covered the sleeping guards with Duncan's blood. She put the daggers in their hands, for 'it must seem their guilt'. When she came back, she saw her husband trembling at the sight of his hands, covered with Duncan's blood. He was saying wildly that nothing could wash off the blood from his hands. If he dipped his hands in the ocean, the green water of the ocean would all turn red. Lady Macbeth mocked her husband, saying that her hands were red like his hands, but her heart was full of courage.

At this time there was a knocking at the door. Like a mad man Macbeth said to the unseen knocker :

"Wake Duncan with thy knocking ! I wish you could do it."

So Macbeth began to regret his vile deed as soon as he had done it. He wished the deed to be undone.

In the morning Macduff and other lords

found the King dead. The alarm-bell was rung and there were terrific cries and shouts. Lady Macbeth came out. She pretended that she had been roused from her sleep by the noise. When she was told that the king had been murdered, she cried out :

"Woe, alas !
What ! in our house ?"



Macbeth makes a theatrical speech.

These unnatural words almost gave out her guilt. Macbeth also made theatrical speech :

"If I had died an hour before this, I would have died happy."

All began to suspect that Macbeth and his wife had done the deed. Malcolm and Donalbain fled away. They feared that they might be killed next.

The flight of Malcolm and Donalbain cleared Macbeth's way to the throne. Macbeth had killed Duncan's body-guards late at night. He spread this story : the King had been killed by his guards : the King's sons had bribed them to do it : they fled away in fear of being caught.

No one believed the story. But it could not be proved that it was untrue. Macbeth was the nearest relation of Duncan. So Macbeth became King.

But neither Macbeth nor Lady Macbeth was happy. Both were troubled in mind by the thought of their great crime.

Lady Macbeth became sad and quiet. She seldom met her husband. Macbeth kept away from her. Both felt they had got nothing by winning the throne.

Macbeth was most troubled by his thought about Banquo. Banquo had been with him from the start. He had seen Macbeth tremble in excitement, when the witches said that

Macbeth would be king. And Macbeth had heard what the witches said about Banquo : he would not be king himself, but he would be father of a line of kings. These thoughts about Banquo greatly disturbed Macbeth's mind. He resolved to have Banquo and his son killed. He employed murderers to catch and kill father and son on a lonely way in a dark night. Banquo was killed, but his son, Fleance escaped.

That night Macbeth and Lady Macbeth had arranged to give, as King and Queen, a grand feast to the lords. A chair was reserved for Banquo. Banquo was killed on his way to the feast. Macbeth moved in the hall restlessly. He could not sit. He was waiting for the news. One of the murderers made a sign to Macbeth. They met secretly outside the hall. The murderer told Macbeth that Banquo had been killed, but Fleance had escaped.

Macbeth went in, glad at the news of Banquo's death, but sad to hear of the escape of Fleance. Macbeth imagined that the ghost of Banquo had come in and sat in Macbeth's place. Macbeth trembled at the sight.

Lady Macbeth came down to him. Macbeth pointed out to her the ghost of Banquo. Macbeth alone was seeing the ghost. Lady Macbeth told

her husband that there was no one in his seat. The ghost disappeared and Macbeth took his seat. But it seemed to Macbeth that the ghost had come in again. Macbeth spoke angrily to the ghost. Lady Macbeth could not make her husband calm. She asked the guests to go. She said to them : "It is a disease of my husband : this fit comes upon him at times ; he comes round when he is left alone." With this lame excuse Lady Macbeth sent away the guests. Macbeth was off his head. She feared that, in course of his wild words, he might give out their murder of Duncan. Lady Macbeth did not know anything about Banquo's murder.

But the lords went away from the feast, full of suspicions. Their idea that Macbeth had killed Duncan was confirmed. When the murder of Banquo became known, every one remembered Macbeth's wild conduct at the feast. All felt sure that it was Macbeth who had brought about Banquo's death.

The whole of Scotland began to hate Macbeth as a bloody tyrant. Among the lords, the person who hated Macbeth most was Macduff. He did not come to Macbeth's feast. After the murder of Banquo. Macduff went away to England.

Duncan's son Malcolm had found shelter in the court of the King of England. Macduff went to join Malcolm and raise an army with the help of the King of England. He wanted to invade Scotland, kill Macbeth and place Malcolm on the throne.

Macbeth heard of the secret trip of Macduff to England. In fear Macbeth went to the witches. He asked them to tell his future. The witches gave Macbeth a false hope. They told him :

"No one born of woman shall harm Macbeth :"

"Macbeth shall never be conquered until the great Birnam wood shall move and come upon Macbeth's castle at Dunsinane."

Macbeth came back from the witches with a happy mind : he won't be harmed by any man ; and nothing will happen to him until something impossible happens—a forest moving towards his fort.

Macbeth now became very bold. He felt he could do anything and yet no danger would come to him. He, therefore, satisfied his anger against Macduff in a brutal way. By his order, Macduff's wife, children and every one in his house were killed.

Macduff received this news in England. He became mad to strike down Macbeth. Along with Malcolm he advanced towards Scotland with a large army. When the army was near Macbeth's fort at Dunsinane, it passed through the Birnam wood. The soldiers were ordered to cut down branches from the trees and bear them. This was meant to hide from Macbeth the number of the invading soldiers.

It seemed to the soldiers, who were guarding Macbeth's fort at Dunsinane, that the Birnam wood was moving towards the fort. This was reported to Macbeth. Macbeth was filled with fear. But he held on to the prophecy of the witches that 'no one born of woman shall harm Macbeth.'

Meanwhile Lady Macbeth died. She committed suicide. For some time she was suffering from the strange disease of sleep-walking. Macbeth asked his Doctor to cure his wife of the disease. The Doctor said that it was a mind's disease. He knew of no medicine that could cure a disease of the mind. Macbeth calmly received the news of his wife's death. He said to himself: "Every one must die one day or another. Every day of our life is a step towards death. Everyone is like an actor on

the stage. He plays his part for a fixed time and then goes out. He is heard no more."

The army of Malcolm and Macduff came down upon Macbeth's fort at Dunsinane. Macduff was burning with anger and hate against Macbeth. He met Macbeth face to face. Macbeth mocked Macduff. He told him that no one born of woman could harm Macbeth. Macduff laughed at this. He told Macbeth that Macduff was not 'born' in a natural way : he was taken out of his mother's womb before due time. Macbeth's courage sank. But he was a great soldier. He fought on till he was killed by Macduff.

Macduff presented Malcolm with Macbeth's head. He cried out :

"Hail Malcolm, King of Scotland."

All echoed the cry in joy.

Meaning of some words and expressions :

rebellion—বিদ্রোহ। rebels—বিদ্রোহিগণ। tide—প্রবাহ। the rest—অবশিষ্ট। faced—সম্মুখীন হইল। treacherous—বিশ্বাসঘাতক। face to face—সামনা-সামনি, মুখোমুখি। yield—আত্মসমর্পণ করা। dispersed—ছত্রভঙ্গ হইয়া গেল। wrath—প্রচণ্ড ক্রোধ। traitor—বিশ্বাসঘাতক। confer—দেওয়া, সমর্পণ করা। messengers

—বার্তাবহগণ। greet—সংবর্ধনা করা। witches—ডাইনীরা। greeted—অভিবাদন করিল। excitement—উত্তেজনা। joke—ঠাট্টা। vanished—অন্তর্হিত হইল। cordially—আন্তরিকতার সহিত। foretold—ভবিষ্যদ্‌বাণী করিয়াছিল। pour—ঢালিয়া দেওয়া, ঢুকাইয়া দেওয়া। castle—দুর্গ। crown—রাজমুকুট বা রাজপদ। vile deed—জঘন্য কার্য। rebuked—ভৎর্সনা করিল। coward—ভীরু, কাপুরুষ। mocked—বিদ্রূপ করিল। magic spell—জাদুমন্ত্র বা ইন্দ্রজাল। a voice cry—একটি উচ্চ আর্তনাদের কণ্ঠস্বর। body-guards—দেহরক্ষিগণ। knocker—যে দরজা ধাক্কা দিতেছে। vile—জঘন্য। alarmbell—বিপদ্‌সঙ্কেত জ্ঞাপনের ঘণ্টা। terrific—ভয়ঙ্কর। pretended—ভান করিল। roused—চমকাইয়া (অথবা চঞ্চল করিয়া) তুলিয়াছে। Woe, alas—হায়, কি দুঃখ! gave out—ব্যক্ত করিল। theatrical—নাটকীয়। had bribed—ঘুষ দিয়াছিল, উৎকোচ দিয়াছিল। start—সূচনা। lonely way—নির্জন পথ। grand feast—বিরাট ভোজ। reserved—সংরক্ষিত। restlessly—অস্থির ভাবে। imagined—কল্পনা করিল। ghost—ভূত, প্রেতাত্মা। calm—নীরব, শান্ত। fit—রোগাদির বা মৃগীরোগের আক্রমণ। comes round—আরোগ্য হওয়া। lame excuse—বাজে ওজর। confirmed—সত্য বলিয়া প্রমাণিত হইল। brought about—সংঘটন করিয়াছিলেন। bloody—খুনে বা নিষ্ঠুর। tyrant—পরপীড়ক বা অত্যাচারী ব্যক্তি। raise an army—সৈন্যবাহিনী গঠন করিতে। secret trip—গোপন পদক্ষেপ। something impossible happens—কোনো অঘটন ঘটে। brutal way—নিষ্ঠুর

উপায়। bear—অভ্যন্তরে ধরিয়া লওয়া। prophecy—ভবিষ্যদ্বাণী। committed suicide—আত্মহত্যা করিয়াছিল। mind's disease—মানসিক রোগ। mocked—বিদ্রূপ করিল। 'born' in a natural way—স্বাভাবিকভাবে জন্ম হওয়া। womb—গর্ভ। before due time—নির্ধারিত সময়ের পূর্বে। echoed—সমস্বরে বলিয়া উঠিল।

Exercises

I. *Answer the following questions in complete sentences :*

(*a*) Who was Duncan ?

(*b*) How and by whom was he killed ?

(*c*) What did the three witches foretell about Macbeth and Banquo ?

(*d*) What did Macbeth think about the prophecies of the witches ?

(*e*) What was Macbeth's plan of becoming king ?

(*f*) Why did Duncan come to Macbeth's castle ?

(*g*) How did Lady Macbeth encourage her husband to kill Duncan ?

(*h*) How was Duncan killed ?

(*i*) What did Macbeth and his wife do to show that Duncan was murdered by his body-guards ?

(j) Who was the Thane of Cawdor ?

(*k*) When was a grand feast arranged by Macbeth and Lady Macbeth ?

(*l*) Why did the guests go away without partaking of the feast ?

(*m*) Where did Malcolm and Macduff go and what did they do ?

(*n*) What false hopes were given by the witches to Macbeth about his success in fight ?

(*o*) How did Lady Macbeth die ?

(*p*) What did Macbeth say to himself after her death ?

(*q*) How did Malcolm and Macduff conduct their army against Macbeth ?

(*r*) What was the result of the fight ?

II. *Put the following phrases rightly in the blank spaces of the sentences :*

got up ; turned the tide ; fled away ; face to face ; way back ; at the end of ; woke up.

(*a*) They — — a large army.

(*b*) The brave Macbeth — — —.

(*c*) The rest — — .

(*d*) Macbeth met the King of Norway, — — — and forced him to yield.

(*e*) Macbeth and Banquo were on their — — .

(*f*) He would return — — — — the battle.

(*g*) Macbeth — — from his deep thought.

III. *Complete these sentences :*

(*a*) The country was in great — .

(*b*) They kept — .

(*c*) Macbeth trembled in — .

(*d*) The King received Macbeth most — .

(*e*) It was her duty to help her husband to be happy in — .

(*f*) Macbeth shall sleep no — .

(*g*) Macbeth was off his — .

IV. *Fill in each blank space with the right word from the brackets :*

(*a*) The news of the battle was brought — the King. (to, from)

(*b*) She was greatly devoted — her husband. (in, to)

(*c*) She said she would do the deed — . (himself, herself)

(*d*) A chair was reserved — Banquo. (to, for)

(*e*) Nothing will happen — him. (upon, to)

(*f*) Macbeth asked his Doctor to cure her wife — the disease. (from, of)

(*g*) Every day of our life is a step — death. (to, towards)

King Lear

PART I

There was an old king named Lear. His queen was dead. He had three daughters—Goneril, Regan and Cordelia.

The old king wished to spend his last days in peace. He, therefore, decided that he would no longer do the duties of a king. He would divide his kingdom into three parts, and give a part to each of his daughters. He would stay for some time with one daughter and for some time with another. He hoped that this would make him free from all cares and he would be very happy.

The marriage of Goneril and Regan had taken place. Goneril was married to the Duke of Albany, and Regan to the Duke of Cornwall. For the hand of the youngest daughter, Cordelia, there were two rivals, King of France and Duke of Burgundy. They were now all in King Lear's palace.

One day King Lear called his three daughters to his court. He held in his hand a map, showing his kingdom divided into three parts.

King Lear asked his daughters to tell him, one after another, how much each loved him.

The King said that he would give the largest share to the daughter who loved him most.

He asked Goneril, the eldest daughter, to speak first. Goneril said : "I love you more than words can express. You are dearer to me than even my eye-sight, life, health, beauty. I love you more than any child ever loved its father."

Lear was highly pleased. He pointed out in the map a fine part of his kingdom. He said, this would go to Goneril and Albany and their children for ever.

Then the King turned to Regan and said : "What says our second daughter, our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall ? Speak."

Regan replied : "I have the same feeling towards you as my sister, Goneril. In telling you how much she loves you, she has said how much I too love you. But, perhaps, I love you even more than she. I do not care for any other joy in life. I am most happy by loving you only."

Lear was pleased. He told Regan that she would have, for ever, a fine part of his kingdom. It was as rich as that given to Goneril.

Then King Lear turned to his youngest daughter, Cordelia. He said to her : "Although

you are my last child, you are not less in my love than your elder sisters—'although our last, not least.' What can you say, about your love



Lear showing the map of his kingdom, divided into three parts

for me, to draw from me a larger share than your sisters ? Speak."

"Nothing, my lord," said Cordelia.

Lear said : "Nothing ?"

Cordelia replied : "Nothing."

Lear said : "Nothing will come of nothing ; speak again."

Cordelia replied : "I love you as a child should love its father,—nor more nor less."

Lear told Cordelia in anger : "What are you doing, Cordelia ? Change your words, or you may ruin your fortune."

Cordelia replied : "My lord, you have given me birth, brought me up, loved me. In return I obey you, love you and honour you. How can my sisters love their husbands if they give all their love to you, as they say ? When I shall marry, my husband will have half my love, half my care and duty. I shall never marry like my sisters, to give all my love to my father."

Lear asked Cordelia : "Do these words come out of your heart ?"

Cordelia said : "Yes, my lord."

Lear said : "So young and so unkind ?"

Cordelia replied : "So young, my lord, and true."

Lear then said : "Let it be so ; let your truth be your wedding gift. In the name of all the gods I swear that from now you are no child of mine."

The Earl of Kent tried to stop the King, but could not. Lear said : "I loved her most and had been hoping for rest for my old age in her tender care. I give her nothing. She is banished

from my kingdom. Goneril and Regan will divide between them the third share meant for Cordelia. I shall only remain King in name. The powers and revenue of kingship will pass to Albany and Cornwall. I shall have one hundred knights to attend me. With them I shall, in turn, spend a month with each of my two daughters, Goneril and Regan."

He gave his crown to Albany and Cornwall, to be shared by them.

Kent again tried to stop the king. He told Lear that he had been deceived by flattery. He reminded him that 'empty vessel sounds much.' Cordelia, he said, did not love him the least although her voice was the lowest. He asked Lear to change his mind.

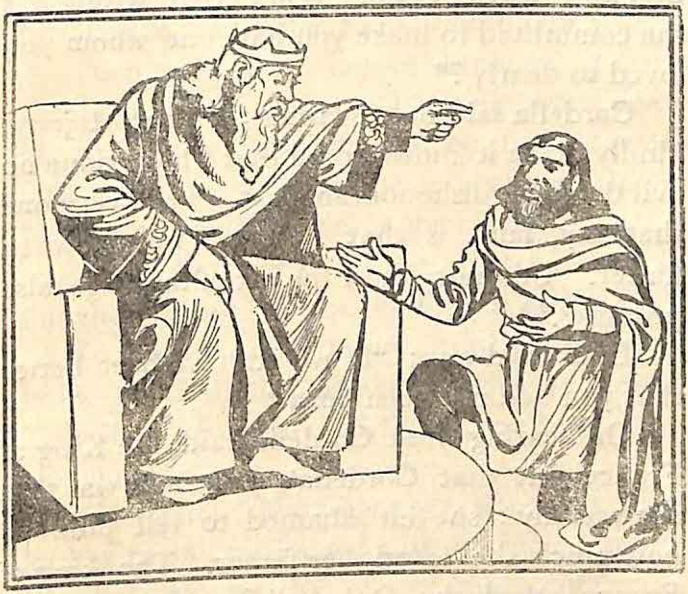
Lear, in his anger, banished Kent. Kent left, saying to Cordelia : "May the gods take you to their shelter. You think justly and have said the right thing."

To Goneril and Regan he said : "May your large speeches come true! May your deeds agree with your words !"

King Lear then sent for the Duke of Burgundy and the King of France, the two suitors for Cordelia.

Lear told Burgundy that Cordelia would

have no dowry from her father. She would be only having his curse.



Lear in his anger, banished Kent

Burgundy said he could not then marry Cordelia.

The King turned to the King of France and said : "I would not ask a great king like you to marry a girl who was hated by her father."

The king of France said to Lear : "It is most strange that your feelings towards Cordelia should change so suddenly. Even now

you were all praise for her: she was described by you as the comfort of your old age and your best and dearest child. What great wrong has she committed to make you hate one whom you loved so dearly?"

Cordelia said to her father: "Your Majesty, kindly make it known to all that I have done no evil deed, no dishonourable act. Tell every one that my fault is that I know not how to flatter. I do not know the art of making false promises."

Lear cried out: "It would have been better that you had not been born."

On hearing what Cordelia said, the King of France felt that Cordelia's only fault was that she was shy: she felt ashamed to tell publicly how much she loved her father. The king of France asked the Duke of Burgundy: "Will you have her? She is herself a dowry."

Burgundy told King Lear: "Royal Lear, give only that portion which you yourself proposed. I will then take Cordelia by the hand and make her Duchess of Burgundy."

Lear said: "Nothing: I have sworn. I am firm."

Burgundy said to Cordelia: "I am sorry, you have so lost a father, and, therefore, you

must also lose a husband."

Cordelia said in anger and disgust: "Let not the Duke of Burgundy worry. Since desire for fortune is his love, I shall not be his wife."

Then said the King of France: "Fairest Cordelia, you are most rich, being poor; dearer to me, being forsaken, for no fault, by your father. I take you on account of your virtues. No dowry could be richer than these."

He told King Lear: "Your dowerless daughter, King, will be the Queen of France."

To Cordelia he said: "Bid your father farewell, Cordelia, although he is so unkind. You lose here only to find something better elsewhere."

Lear said: "Thou hast her, King of France: let her be thine; for we have no such daughter, nor shall ever see that face of hers again."

All left the court except the King of France, Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia. Then followed this talk:

King of France: "Bid farewell to your sisters, Cordelia."

Cordelia: "The jewels of our father! Cordelia leaves you with eyes full of tears. I know what you are, but as I am your sister, I am most unwilling to name your faults. Use our father

well. I leave him in your care. You have said you love him so much. But in spite of it, I would wish for him a better place than with you."

Regan said: "You need not instruct us about our duties."

Goneril said to Cordelia: "Let all your care now be to please your hasband. He has received you with the charity that one shows to a beggar. You have been undutiful to our father and have been rightly served."

Cordelia said: "In course of time your real nature will come out."

The King of France said: "Come, my fair Cordelia."

Goneril and Regan were now alone. At once they spoke out their real feelings.

Goneril told Regan that their father was so rash and whimsical: he loved Cordelia most and had cast her off. Regan said that he had also banished the innocent Kent. Goneril said that if Lear treated Regan and her in that way, this share in his kingdom, that had come to them, would be of little good to them; they should, therefore, join together to save themselves from the whims of their father. He had been always rash and short-tempered, and old age had made him more so.

An unhappy situation of the same kind arose in the house of the Duke of Gloucester. Like Lear the old Duke bestowed his blind affection on his wicked son, Edmund, and sent away his good son, Edgar. There was something irregular in Edmund's birth. Edmund knew that Edgar, his father's lawful son, would alone be his heir. Edmund, therefore, resolved to poison his father's mind against the good and innocent Edgar. He forged a letter, which seemed to have been written by Edgar to Edmund. In it Edgar suggested to Edmund that they should kill their father and have his wealth. Edgar would give to Edmund half the share of his father's property if it came to them at once. Edmund cleverly led his father to believe that Edgar had written the letter. Edmund told his father that Edgar used to say: "When the son has grown up and the father is too old, the son should be the guardian of the father and manage his property."

Gloucester was deceived by the wicked son. He believed that Edgar really wanted to kill him. Edmund played a trick on Edgar too. He led him to believe that their father was terribly angry with Edgar and would kill him. Edgar fled away from the house in fear, and

Edmund's path to his father's property was clear.

Meaning of some words and expressions :

decided—সিদ্ধান্ত করিলেন। all cares—সকল উদ্বেগ বা উৎকণ্ঠা, সকল চিন্তা-ভাবনা। for the hand—পাণি-গ্রহণের জন্য, বিবাহের জন্য। care for—গ্রাহ্য করা। not less in love—স্নেহের দিক হইতে বা ভালবাসায় কম নহে। come of—উৎপন্ন হওয়া। brought up—পালন করিয়াছ, মানুষ করিয়াছ। wedding gift—বিবাহের যৌতুক। tender care—শান্তসেবা, স্নেহপূর্ণ যত্ন। banished—নির্বাসিত হইল। revenue—রাজস্ব। deceived—প্রতারিত হইয়াছেন। flattery—তোষামোদ। suitor—বিবাহের প্রার্থী। dowry—যৌতুক। to make one hate—কাহারও ঘৃণার উদ্রেক করানো। dishonourable—অসম্মানজনক। swear (*p.t.*—swore, *p. p.* sworn)—প্রতিজ্ঞা বা শপথ করা। in disgust—বিরক্তি বা বিতৃষ্ণা-ভরে। worry—দুশ্চিন্তাগ্রস্ত হওয়া। forsaken—পরিত্যক্ত। to bid farewell—বিদায়গ্রহণ করা। have been rightly served—যোগ্য বা উপযুক্ত শাস্তি পাইয়াছ। come out—বাহির হওয়া, প্রকাশিত হওয়া। cast off—দূরে সরাইয়া দেওয়া বা পরিত্যাগ করা। would be of little good—সামান্য কাজেও আসিবে বা কোনই কাজে আসিবে না। rust—একগুঁয়ে। short-tempered—খিটখিটে। to make up one's mind—কৃতনিশ্চয় হওয়া। poison—বিষাইয়া তোলা। terribly—ভয়ঙ্করভাবে।

Exercises

I. *Answer these questions in complete sentences :*

(*a*) Why did King Lear decide to divide his kingdom into three parts ?

(*b*) What did King Lear want to know from his daughters ?

(*c*) What did Goneril and Regan say in reply ?

(*d*) What was the reply of Cordelia ?

(*e*) What did king Lear say in reply ?

(*f*) Who married Cordelia and why ?

(*g*) How did Cordelia bid farewell to her elder sisters?

(*h*) What did Goneril and Regan say in reply ?

(*i*) What did they say about the nature of their father ?

II. *Put these following phrases rightly in the blank spaces of the sentences :*

Care for ; on account of ; bid farewell; in spite of ; in course of ;

(*a*) I do not — — any other joy in life.

(*b*) I take you — — — your virtues.

(*c*) — — to your sisters, Cordelia.

(*d*) But — — — it, I would wish for him a better place than with you.

(*e*) — — — time your real nature will come out.

III. *Complete these sentences :*

(*a*) King Lear cast Cordelia — .

(*b*) Edgar fled away from the house in — .

(*c*) The marriage of Goneril and Regan had taken — .

(*d*) Nothing will come of —— .

PART II

Poor Lear had soon to reap the fruits of his folly. The fears of Cordelia came true. According to his plan Lear was to live first with one daughter and then with the other. The elder daughter, Goneril, Duchess of Albany, received the King and his hundred knights first. The King had two companions—one, the Fool—, his court jester and the other, Caius. This Caius was the banished Kent in disguise. He came to serve the king out of his deep love for him. He had said to himself: "Now, banished, Kent, if you can serve him who has banished you, he, my master, will find how hard I work for him."

A man, in the service of Goneril, censured the King's Fool. For this Lear struck the man. This was reported to Goneril and she became angry.

She said to herself: "My father is annoying me day and night. Every hour he does one wrong thing or another. I will not endure it. His knights behave wildly and he rebukes us over trifling things. When he returns from hunting, I will not speak with him."

She asked an attendant to tell her father,

when he came, that she was unwell. She directed that all her people should show the King that they did not care for him. They should be cold and rude to his knights. She said to herself: "Foolish old man, who wishes to manage his kingdom which he has given away to us. Old fools are in their second childhood and they must be checked as children are. I will at once write to my sister, asking her to follow the same course."

When Lear returned from hunting, he was met by Oswald. This was a bad fellow and was the most trusted attendant of Goneril. The King was greatly annoyed to find that he was not received, as usual, by his daughter.

He said to Oswald: "You, you, fellow, where's my daughter?"

Oswald only said, "If it pleases you—", and went away.

Lear cried out, "What does the fellow say? Call the rascal back."

One of the King's knights followed him and came back. He told the King that the man said that his daughter was not well.

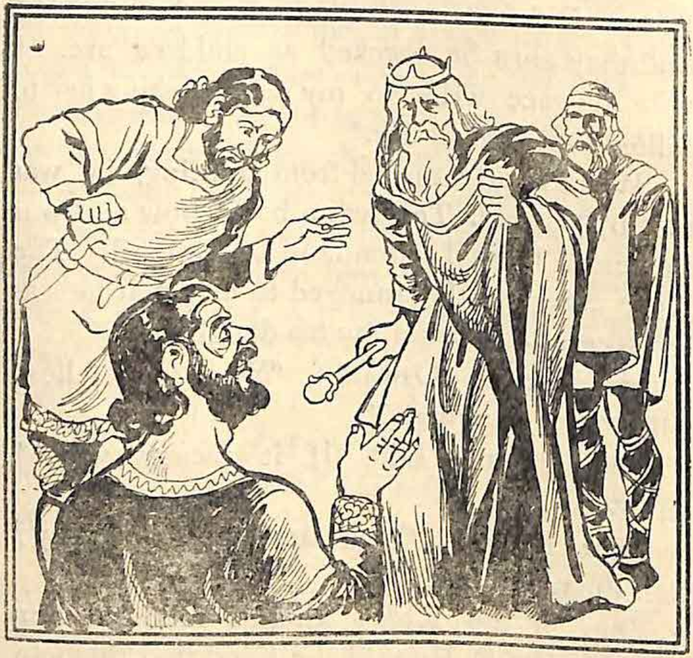
Lear cried out: "But why did not the slave come back to me when I called him?"

The knight told the King that the man

plainly said that he would not.

Lear cried out : "He would not !"

The knight told the King : "My lord, I don't know what the matter is ; but I feel, Your Highness is no longer entertained with any warm affection."



Oswald said, 'if it pleases you', and went away

The King told the knight : "You only remind me of what I have been feeling. I have perceived a sign of neglect, of late." Then he

suddenly cried out : "But where's my Fool ? I have not seen him these two days."

The knight said : "Since my young lady's going to France, sir, the Fool has become very pale and gloomy."

Lear said : "No more of that ; I have noted it well." He told an attendant : "Go and tell my daughter I would speak with her."

To another attendant he said : "Go and call my Fool."

Oswald appeared again. Lear angrily told him : "O, you sir, you, come here, sir : who am I, sir ?"

Oswald replied : "My lady's father."

Lear cried out : "My lady's father ! You dog ! You slave ! You cur."

Oswald replied : "I am none of these my lord : I beg your pardon."

Lear said : "Do you venture to cast angry looks at me, you rascal ?" Saying this, the king struck Oswald.

Oswald said : "I will not be struck, my lord."

Kent said : "Nor kicked either ?—you mean football." Kent kicked Oswald down.

Lear said to Kent : "I thank you, fellow ; you have served me and I will love you."

Kent pulled up Oswald and pushed him out.

The King was highly pleased and gave Kent money.

The Fool had just come. He had seen it all. He offered Kent his fool's cap. Kent asked why the Fool was giving him his cap.

The Fool replied : "For taking the King's part when the King is in distress. If you follow him, you too will suffer. So you are a fool and should wear the Fool's cap."

The Fool then offered his cap to the king. He told him : "By giving all you had, to your daughters, you have acted like a fool and should wear the Fool's cap."

Lear said : "Do you call me fool, boy ?"

The Fool replied : "All your other titles you have given away : you only keep your title of 'Fool'. The title came to you at your birth. You are a born fool."

Goneril now appeared with a frown on her face.

The king said : "How now, daughter ! Why do you put on that frown ? It seems to me that recently this frown is almost always on your face."

The Fool said to the king : "You were a happy fellow when you had no need to care for her frowning. I am better than you are

now. I am a Fool, and you are nothing."

Goneril said to the king : "This unmannerly Fool of yours and your other rude followers are constantly disturbing the house. They are always quarrelling and behaving in a wild and vulgar way. I wanted to bring this to your notice. But I did not, for I felt that you were supporting all this. If this be so, we shall have to take steps to stop it."

Lear cried out : "Are you my daughter ?"

He looked about and said : "Does any one here know me ? This is not Lear. Does Lear walk or speak in this way ? Where are these eyes ? Who is it that can tell me who I am ?"

The Fool said : "Lear's shadow."

Lear said : "I should like to believe I had daughters."

The Fool said : "You have daughters but they want to make you an obedient father."

Lear looked at Goneril and asked : "Your name, fair gentle woman ?"

Goneril said : "This is just like your other odd whims. I request you to understand what I want. As you are old, you should be wise. I desire you to cut down the number of your knights. They are wild and disorderly."

Lear cried out like a mad man : "Saddle my

horses. Call my knights together. Hateful wretch, I will not trouble you. Yet I have another daughter left." Lear sobbed. "Sorrow is sure to come to the man who repents too late."

Albany appeared on the scene. Lear told him: "O, sir, have you come? Is this your wish? Speak, sir. Ingratitude is a devil with a marble heart. It is more terrible than the sea-monster, when it shows itself in a child."

Albany said: "Pray, sir, be patient."

Lear cried out: "What a small fault was committed by Cordelia! It made me a different person from what I am. It drew from my heart all love and filled it with poison. O Lear, Lear, Lear!" He said this, striking his head again and again.

Albany said: "My Lord, I am innocent. I don't know what has thrown you into this state of mind."

Lear said: "It may be so, my lord."

Lear found out that fifty of his knights had been driven away by Goneril, in course of a fortnight. He told Goneril: "Is it come to this? Yet have I a daughter left. She, I am sure, is kind and loving to her father. When she will hear this about you she will tear off the skin of your beastly face, with her nails.

You will find I shall take back my power. Don't think I have given it away for ever."

Goneril said to her husband : "Do you mark that, my Lord ?"

Albany said : "In spite of my great love for you, I cannot be so unkind to the old king."

Goneril told her husband : "It would have been unsafe for us to let the king have one hundred knights. They might attack us any moment."

Albany said : "Well, you fear too much."

Goneril replied : "It is safer than trust too much."

Goneril at once sent a letter to her sister, Regan, through Oswald.

Lear too sent a letter to Regan through Kent. In course of his idle talk with the Fool, he said to himself : "I did her (Cordelia) wrong. O, left me not be mad, not mad ! Kind gods ! keep me calm. I do not wish to be mad !"

On receipt of Goneril's letter, Regan and her husband, Duke of Cornwall, left their house. They did so in order to be away when the king would arrive. They came over to the castle of the Duke of Gloucester. They heard of the affair of Gloucester's son, Edgar. Regan spoke about it to Gloucester, with sympathy.

Gloucester said to her: "O, madam, my old heart is cracked, is cracked."

Cornwall told Edmund: "Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father the devotion that a child should show."

Edmund said: "It was duty, Sir."

Cornwall said: "Edgar must be found our. When he is caught, he will be duly punished. As for the good Edmund, I take him into my service."

Edmund readily agreed. He was now sure that Cornwall would help him to have all his father's property.

Cornwall and Regan then told Gloucester why they had come to Gloucester's castle. They had received a letter from Goneril. The King would be coming to their house. He was leaving Goneril's house in anger. Cornwall and Regan did not wish to receive the King in their house. So they would be "not at home" when the King would come.

Kent, who had come with the king's letter and Oswald who had brought the letter from Goneril, met outside Gloucester's castle.

Kent recognized Oswald. He remembered Oswald's insult to the King in Goneril's house. Kent understood that Oswald had brought a

letter from Goneril to poison Regan against her father. At the very sight of him Kent lost his temper and beat him. There was a row and all came out.

Cornwall and Regan found that the messenger from Goneril had been beaten by the messenger from the King. This was too much for them to bear. Cornwall ordered that Kent should be put in the stocks. It was an insulting punishment meant only for criminals.

The Duke of Gloucester said that this should not be done. He said that it would offend the King to see his messenger in the stocks. But Regan was more afraid of displeasing her sister than her father. So they put Kent in the stocks in front of the castle and left him there.

Meaning of some words and expressions :

Reap—সংগ্রহ করা, (ফল স্বরূপ) পাওয়া। folly—নির্বুদ্ধিতা, বোকামি। companion—সহচর, সঙ্গী। censured—তিরস্কার করিয়াছি। annoy—বিরক্ত বা উত্যক্ত করা। endure—সহ্যকরা। trifling—তুচ্ছ। cold—উদাসীন, হতশ্রদ্ধ। rude—অশিষ্ট। entertain—আদরযত্ন করা। remind—মনে করাইয়া দেওয়া। perceive—উপলব্ধি বা প্রত্যক্ষ করা। neglect—উপেক্ষা, অবহেলা। of late—সম্প্রতি। pale—ম্লান। gloomy—বিষণ্ণ। pull up—টানিয়া উঠানো বা উপড়ানো। push out—ঠেলিয়া বাহির করা। frown—ভ্রূকুটি, অসন্তোষপূর্ণ ভ্রূভঙ্গী।

unmannerly—অসভ্য, অশিষ্ট। vulgar—ইতর। whim—উৎকট খেয়াল। cut down—হ্রাস করা। saddle—জিন লাগানো। wretch—দুরাত্মা, পাপাত্মা। sob—বিলাপ করা বা ফোঁপাইয়া কাঁদা। repent—অনুতপ্ত হওয়া। ingratitude—অকৃতজ্ঞতা, কৃতঘ্নতা। crack—বিদীর্ণ হওয়া।

Exercises

I. *Answer these questions in complete sentences:*

(*a*) Why was Goneril angry with her father?
(*b*) Why was Lear annoyed with Oswald?
(*c*) Why was Kent thanked by Lear?
(*d*) Why did the Fool offer his cap to the king?
(*e*) What did Goneril say to her father when she appeared again?
(*f*) What was the reply of Lear?
(*g*) Why did Lear cry out like a mad man?
(*h*) What did Lear say to Albany?
(*i*) Why did Goneril drive away some knights of her father?
(*j*) Why did Regan and her husband leave their house?

II. *Put these phrases rightly in the blank spaces of the sentences:*

out of; kicked down; pull up; push out; put on; cut down; of late.

(*a*) Kent came to serve the king — — his deep love for him.
(*b*) Kent — Oswald —.
(*c*) Kent — — Oswald and — him —.
(*d*) Why do you — — that frown?

(*e*) I desire you to — — the number of your knights.

(*f*) I have perceived a sign of neglect, —.

III. *Complete these sentences:*

(*a*) This Caius was the banished Kent in —.

(*b*) My father is annoying me day and —.

(*c*) Old fools are in their second —.

(*d*) Call the rascal —.

(*e*) Saddle my —.

(*f*) Ingratitude is a devil with a marble —.

IV. *Fill in each blank space with the right word from the brackets:*

(*a*) He rebukes us — trifling things. (on, over)

(*b*) They should be cold and rude — his knights. (to, for)

(*c*) He was met — Oswald. (by, with)

(*d*) Your Highness is so longer entertained — any warm affection. (with, at)

(*e*) I wanted to bring his — your notice. (at, to)

(*f*) Albany appeared — the scene. (at, on)

(*g*) It was an insulting punishment meant only — criminals. (to, for)

(*h*) You only remind me — what I have been feeling. (about, of)

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PART III

King Lear went to the house of Cornwall and Regan. On hearing there that they had gone over to the castle of the Duke of Gloucester, the king came there. He was shocked to find his messenger, Kent, in the stocks. He asked: "What is he who has so much forgotten that you are my messenger as to throw you into the stocks?"

Kent replied: "It is both he and she; your son and daughter."

The king cried out: "It is a gross insult. It is worse than murder."

Kent told the king that he offered to fight with Oswald. He remembered that the fellow had insulted the king in Goneril's house. He also felt sure that is was the letter, which he had brought, that led Cornwall and Regan to leave their house to avoid the king.

Lear was filled with deep sorrow. He cried out: "Where is his daughter?"

Gloucester came and told the king that Cornwall and Regan were tired, having travelled all night.

Lear said: "These are mere excuses." He looked at Kent in the stocks. He had no doubt

that they had planned to insult him. He sent Gloucester again to call them. They came and Kent was set free.

The King said to Regan : "Beloved Regan, your sister has treated me most cruelly. I can hardly speak to you. You will not believe what she has done—O Regan !"

Regan told Lear : "I pray you, sir, be patient. I think she has not ailed in her duty. It is you who have not been able to understand her worth. If she has checked your wild knights, she has done nothing wrong."

Lear cried out : "My curses on her !"

Regan said : "O, sir, you are old ; you should be ruled and led by younger persons. Therefore, I pray you, return to my sister and tell her that you have done her wrong."

Lear said : "Ask her forgiveness ? Shall I say, 'Dear daughter, I confess that I am old. On my knees I beg that you will kindly give my clothing, bed and food ?'"

Regan said : "Good sir, no more of these ugly tricks. Do return to my sister."

Lear cried out : "Never, Regan. She has reduced the number of my knights to half. She has frowned on me, hit my heart with her tongue. A curse on her for her ingratitude !"

Regan said that Lear would curse her too when he lost his temper. Lear said: "No, Regan, you will never have my curse. You are of a tender nature and will never be cruel to me. Her eyes burn but your looks are soft and they give me comfort. You will never grudge my pleasures. You will not cut down the number of my knights. You will never shut me out of your house. You will never forget that I gave you half my kingdom."

Just then Goneril arrived there. Regan received her sister with great affection. Lear cried out: "O Regan, will you take her by the hand?"

Goneril replied, on Regan's behalf: "Why not by the hand, sir? All is not offence that a foolish old man thinks to be so."

Regan told Lear: "Father, you are now old and weak and should behave as such. Go now to my sitster's place. Be there till the end of your one month's stay with her, with half of your knights. Come then to me. I am now away from home and have not here what is needed to entertain you."

Lear cried out: "Return to her, and fifty men dismissed? No, I would rather go into the woods and live with the wolf and owl. Return

with her ? Ask me rather to be slave to this hateful fellow, Oswald."

Goneril said : "You may do it, if you so choose, sir."

Lear said to Goneril : I pray you, daughter, do not make me mad. I will not trouble you, my child ; farewell. We will meet no more, no more will see each other. But yet you are my flesh, my blood, my daughter. But I will not censure you. I can be patient ; I can stay with Regan, I and my hundred knights."

Regan said : "Not exactly so. I did not expect you yet nor am I prepared to receive you. Listen, sir, to my sister. Fifty followers ? Is it not enough ? Why should you need more ? It would be costly and dangerous for my sister to keep a hundred knights in her house." Goneril said : "You might, my lord, receive service from her servants or mine."

Regan said : "Quite so. If, by chance, our servants neglected their duty to you, we could control them. When you will come to me, please bring only twenty-five knights."

Lear said : "I gave you all."

Regan said : "You gave it in proper time."

Lear then turned to Goneril and said to her : "I will go with you. You would let me

have fifty knights. It is double Regan's number, and so your love for me is double hers."

Goneril said : "Hear me my lord. What need have you for twenty-five, ten or five to attend you ? You will be in a house where there are plenty of a tendants to serve you."

Regan said : What need have you for even one attendant of your own ?"

Lear replied : "O, do not talk of what one needs. Even the poorest beggar has a little more than what he actually needs. What I need most now is patience. O gods, give me patience. You, unnatural daughters, I shall take revenge on you. You hink I will weep ! no, I will not weep. This heart will break into a hundred thousand pieces before I will weep."

Turning to the Fool, Lear said : "O fool, I shall go mad !"

A storm rose. Regain said : "This house is small. The old man and his attendants could not be

Goneril said : "He is at fault. He came away from his shelter in my house and must suffer the bitter fruits of his folly."

Lear rode away with his attendants in great anger. Cornwall said : "Let him have his way."

Goneril told Gloucester not to ask him to

come in. Regan said to Gloucester that it would be dangerous for Gloucester to let in the king's wicked knights. They might induce the king to do anything.

Cornwall said : "My Regan gives good advice. Shut up your doors, my lord. It is a wild night. Come out of the storm."

Kent lost touch with the king. He was alone, out in the storm, with only the Fool by his side. The king was now quite mad. He shouted at the storm : "Blow winds, and crack your cheeks ! rage ! blow ! Rain, wind, thunder, come down upon me. I would not blame you for your cruelty. I did not give you my kingdom. I did not call you children. You owe me nothing. I will be patient. I will say nothing."

Kent found out the king. He told him : "Alas, sir, are you here ? Even the wild animals are in their caves. I have never seen a storm like this. No man can stand such suffering and fear."

Lear said : "Let the gods hunt out the doers of wrong. Let those people fear this storm. I have no fears from it. I have done no wrong. I have been wronged by others. I am a man more sinned against than sinning."

There was a hut near by. Kent took the king and the Fool, who was shivering with cold, into that hut.

The Fool entered the hut first. He at once rushed out with a cry. He said there was a ghost in the hut. This was Edgar. Gloucester's banished son. He was hiding himself. He pretended to be a mad beggar. He told the Fool that his name was "Poor Tom". Kent called out the spirit. Edgar, disguised as a madman, came out. He uttered wild words without sense. Lear told him : "Have you given all to your two daughters ? And has that brought you to this state ?"

Edgar cried out : "Who gives anything to poor Tom ? Tom is cold. O, do de, do de, do de. Do poor Tom some charity. He is in the hands of an evil spirit. The spirit is there and there, and there."

Lear said : "What, have his daughters reduced him to this state ? Could you save nothing ? Do you give them all ?"

Kent said : "He has no daughters, sir."

Lear cried out : "He certainly has. Nothing could make him so miserable except his unkind daughters."

The storm was still raging. Gloucester had

come out with a light in search of the king. He did not recognize his son, Edgar. But Edgar recognized his father and began to talk more wildly. Gloucester told the king: "Come with me. I did not obey all commands of your cruel daughters. I have barred my doors as they asked me to do. But I have ventured to come and seek you out. Please come with me to a place where fire and food are ready."

Kent asked Gloucester to try to induce the king to come to a place of shelter. He said that the king was turning mad. Kent was not recognized by Gloucester. He said to the disguised Kent: "Can you blame him if he has turned mad? His daughters seek his death. You say the king is turning mad. I will tell you, friend, I am almost mad myself. I had a son who sought my life. He is now banished. I loved him, friend; no father ever loved his son more dearly. The grief has broken my heart to pieces. What a night is this!"

Lear was taken to a farmhouse near Gloucester's castle. Kent, Fool and Edgar were with him. The king was now stark mad. The Fool failed to cheer him up by his jokes. Lear was tired and went to bed saying: "Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains: so, so, so.

We will go to supper in the morning."

The Fool said: "And I will go to bed at noon." The Fool went away and was seen no more. He felt that his occupation was gone. His wit and fun would now produce no effect upon the king.

Edgar tried to keep up his pose as a madman. But the sight of the king's condition filled his eyes with tears. It became hard for him to keep up his pretence. He said to himself: "My tears I cannot stop. They will mar my disguise as a madman."

Gloucester came. Kent told him that the king was sleeping but he must not be disturbed. His understanding was completely lost.

Gloucester said: "But he has to be removed at once. I have overheard a plot of death upon him. There is a litter ready; lay him in it, and drive toward Dover. There you will meet king; if you lose even half an hour, his life and your life and that of all who try to save the king, will be lost."

Lear is carried away.

Meaning of some words and expressions

Insult—অপমান, অবজ্ঞা। excuses—ওজর, মিথ্যা অজুহাত। curses—অভিশাপ। confess—স্বীকার ক।

কবুল করা। temper—মেজাজ। offence—অপরাধ। dismiss—বিতাড়িত করা। hateful—ঘৃণিত। costly—খরচ সাপেক্ষ। dangerous—বিপজ্জনক। by chance—কোনক্রমে, হঠাৎ। control—শাসনে রাখা। plenty—অসংখ্য। patience—ধৈর্য। incense—রাগান্বিত বা উত্তেজিত করা। blame—দোষারোপ করা। cruelty—নিষ্ঠুরতা। owe—ঋণী থাকা। caves—গুহাগুলি। shivering—কাঁপিতেছিল। rushed out—সবেগে বাহির হইল। ghost—ভূত। pretend—ভান করা। utter—উচ্চারণ করা। miserable—দুর্দশাগ্রস্ত। raging—প্রবল বেগে বহিতেছিল। recognize—চিনিতে পারা। induce—প্ররোচিত করা। stark—সম্পূর্ণরূপে। cheer up—প্রফুল্ল রাখা। joke—ঠাট্টা, তামাসা। curtains—পরদা। occu pation—কর্মভার, পেশা বা বৃত্তি। wit—রসিকতা। fun—কৌতুক, তামাশা। effect—প্রভাব, ক্রিয়া। pose—পাগলের ভাবভঙ্গী। pretence—ছল বা ভান। plot—ষড়যন্ত্র। drive—চালিত বা তাড়িত করা। welcome—অভ্যর্থনা। protection—রক্ষার ব্যবস্থা।

Exercises

I. *Answer these questions in complete sentences:*

(*a*) Why did Lear ride away with his attendants when the storm came?

(*b*) Why did Lear shout at the storm?

(*c*) Why did the Fool rush out of the hut with a cry?

(*d*) Who was there inside?

(*e*) What did Lear say when he saw Edgar in that miserable condition?

(*f*) Why did the Fool go away?

(*g*) Why was Gloucester anxious to remove the king without any delay.

II. *Put these phrases rightly in the blank spaces of the sentences* :

set free ; keep up ; shut up ; called out ; seek out ; cheer up ;

(*a*) Kent was — —.

(*b*) — — your doors.

(*c*) Kent — — the spirit.

(*d*) I have returned to come and — you — out.

(*e*) The Fool failed to — him — by his jokes.

(*f*) Edgar tried to — — his pose as a madman.

III. *Complete these sentences* :

(*a*) He was shocked to find his messenger, Kent, in the —.

(*b*) You will never grudge my —.

(*c*) I would rather go into the woods and live with the wolf and —.

(*d*) Do not make me —.

IV. *Fill in each blank space with the right word from the brackets* :

(*a*) Lear was filled — deep sorrow. (up, with)

(*b*) She has not failed — her duty. (on, in)

(*c*) My curses — her. (about, on)

(*d*) She has reduced the number of my knights — half. (into, to)

(*e*) She has frowned — me. (to, on)

(*f*) You will never be cruel — me. (upon, to)

(*g*) I have no fears — it. (for, from)

PART IV

Kent had managed to send secret information to Cordelia about the condition of her father. Cordelia induced her husband, the king of France, to send an army to England to fight against Goneril and Regan and their husbands. Gloucester received a letter saying that the French army had landed in England. Gloucester said this privately to his son, Edmund. He told him: "We must be on the side of the king." The wicked Edmund thought that he would give out the secret to Cornwall. He said to himself: "I will steal the letter and show it to Cornwall. This must bring me that which my father will lose. The younger rise when the old fall."

When Gloucester went out to relieve the king, Edmund reported it to Cornwall. He gave him the letter that Gloucester had received about the landing of the French army. Cornwall was highly pleased with Edmund for this secret help, and at once made him Earl of Gloucester.

Cornwall sent the letter to Albany. He asked his servants to seek out Gloucester. Regan said: "Hang him at once." Goneril said: "Pluck out his eyes."

Oswald came and reported that Gloucester had removed the king to Dover where the French soldiers had landed.

Gloucester was brought. Regan called him "an ungrateful fox" and Cornwall ordered his men to bind his arms. Regan plucked his beard. Cornwall asked him to say how he received the letters from France and where he had sent the king. Gloucester said he had sent the king to Dover. Regan asked him, "Why to Dover, sir ?" Gloucester replied : "Because I would not see your cruel nails pluck out his poor old eyes." Cornwall took the hint and plucked out Gloucester's eyes. While Cornwall was doing it, a servant of his tried to stop him. He killed the servant but himself received a hurt by the servant's sword. Gloucester was totally blind and cried out : "All dark and comfortless. Where is my son Edmund ? Edmund, take revenge on this cruel act." Regan mockingly said : "O treacherous villain ! You call on him who hates you. It was Edmund who informed us of your treachery."

Gloucester cried out : "O my follies ! then Edgar was falsely accused. Kind gods, forgive me that, and make my good son Edgar prosper." Thus the moment Gloucester lost his phy-

sical eyes, he gained his mental vision. He was really blind when he had eyes and he begins to see when his eyes are gone.

Cornwall's wound bled more and more and he died soon after.

The blind Gloucester was being led by an old tenant of his. Edgar saw his father in this state. He heard him cry : "O dear son Edgar, you were the victim of your deceived father's anger ! If only I could see you in my touch, I would say I had eyes again." Gloucester sobbed and said to himself : "We are to the gods as flies are to playful boys. They kill us for their sport." Gloucester's attendant asked Edgar who he was. Edgar replied he was "Poor mad Tom." Gloucester recognized the voice as that of the madman he had seen in the previous night's storm. He had reminded him of his son Edgar. He asked his attendant to leave him to the madman and go. The man left and Gloucester asked the madman to lead him to Dover. He asked him to take him to the brink of a tall cliff there. Edgar took his father's arm and led him towards Dover.

Goneril and Regan had a further moral fall. The two ungrateful daughters became faithless wives as well. Both developed a guilty passion

for Edmund.

Albany was disgusted with the daughters' cruelty to their father. He said to his wife, Goneril : "What have you done ? Tigers, not daughters, what have you performed ?" Goneril called her husband a coward and a fool. A messenger came with the news that the Duke of Cornwall was dead. He reported that Cornwall had been wounded by his servant when he was blinding the eyes of Gloucester. Albany cried out : "This shows that there are gods above us and they are just. They quickly punish our crimes." Albany asked the messenger where was Edmund, the son of Gloucester, when he was blinded. The messenger said : "It was he who informed against his father. He left the house at the time on purpose." Albany said : "Gloucester, I shall reward you for the love you showed the king and shall take revenge on those who made you blind."

Cordelia came over to Dover with the French troops. Lear was brought to her tent. Kent was deeply moved by Cordelia's great love for her father. He felt the contrast between her and her wicked sisters. He thought within himself : "It is the stars under which we are born that make us what we are ; otherwise, how

could children of such a different kind be born of the same parents ?" Sometimes Lear now was in his senses and could understand what was happening. He understood that Cordelia was close to him. But he would not agree to see her. He was filled with shame. He felt what a great wrong he had done to Cordelia. He had given away what was hers to his dog-hearted daughters. Cordelia engaged a doctor to treat her father. She said that if he could bring him back to his senses she would give him her all.

Edgar led Gloucester over the fields near Dover. Gloucester wanted him to bring him to the brink of a cliff. He intended to jump down and die. But Edgar, the loving son would not let that be. He led him over level ground, telling him that they were climbing a hill. He took him to a spot and told him that now they were at the brink, Gloucester knelt down and prayed to the gods. He said to the gods : "If Edgar live, O bless him !" He then fell forward and nothing happened. Edgar changed his voice and said to his father : "You have fallen from a great height. It is strange that you did not die." Edgar pretended to be another person, at the bottom of the cliff. He took Gloucester by the arm and led him on.

Oswald had been promised a great reward if he could catch and kill the eyeless Gloucester. He found him and raised his sword. Edgar stopped him. They fought and Edgar knocked him down. Oswald died and, while dying, asked Edgar to send to Edmund the letter he would find in his pocket. It was a personal and private letter to Edmund from Oswald's mistress, Goneril. Edgar read the letter and found that in it Goneril had asked Edmund to kill her husband, for that would clear the way for her union with Edmund. The good Edgar was shocked by this plot of Goneril on her husband's life. He resolved to take the letter to Albany at once.

Cordelia came to her father and said : "Sir, do you konw me ? O, look upon me, sir, and bless me with your hands over me."

Lear knelt down and said : "I am a foolish old man, over eighty years old, and I am not quite in my senses. I think this lady to be my child, Cordelia."

Cordelia said : "And so I am, I am."

Lear said : "Are there tears in your eyes ? I pray, do not weep. If you have poison for me, I will drink it. I know you do not love me. Your sisters have done me wrong without

any cause. You have some cause, they have not.

Cordelia cried out : "No cause, no cause."

Lear said : "You must bear with me. Pray, forget and forgive : I am old and foolish."

Before going to meet the Duke of Albany, Edgar told his father who he was. The blind old man could not bear the shock of this joy of having his good son back. His heart burst and he died with a smile on his face.

Edger rushed to Albany with Goneril's letter to Edmund, which he had found on Oswald.

Edmund's love was sought by both Goneril and Regan. Goneril feared that, now that Regan was a widow, she would marry Edmund. So she decided to kill Regan. She mixed poison with her drink.

The army of Cordelia was defeated by that of Goneril and Regan. Edmund was the commander of the army of Goneril and Regan. He had Lear and Cordelia seized and sent to prison.

Cordelia took the defeat calmly. She said : "This is not the first instance in this wicked world of the good being defeated by the bad."

Lear told Cordelia : "Come, let us go to prison. We two alone will sing like birds in

the cage. When you will ask my blessing I will kneel down and ask you to forgive me. So we will live, and pray, and sing, and tell old tales. Yours is a noble sacrifice. The gods themselves worship such sacrifices."

After father and daughter had been taken to prison, Edmund sent an order that the two should be hanged.

Meanwhile the wheel of Edmund's fortune had and evil turn. Albany learned all about Edmund and his wife from the letter which Edgar had brought him.

Albany said to Edmund, with that letter in his hand : "Edmund, I arrest you and also this gilded serpent—Goneril." Regan cried, "Sick O sick !" Goneril said to herself : "If not, I will never trust medicine."

Just at that moment Edgar appeared. At once he challenged Edmund to a fight, saying : "Thou art a traitor, false to the gods, thy brother, and thy father. You made a plot to kill this noble man, Duke of Albany. Say 'no' to these charges, if you dare."

Edmund denied the charges and challenged him to a fight. They fought and Edmund fell. To the dying Edmund Edgar said : "My name is Edgar and I am your father's son."

Edmund said : "What you have said against me is all true. The wheel has come full circle. I had risen to the top. I am now back again to the bottom."

Albany showed Goneril the letter she had written to Edmund. She ran away in fear. Albany asked the dying Edmund : "Speak, Edmund, where is the king and where is Cordelia ?"

Edmund said : "I want to do some good before I die. I sent a note to the prison, directing that father and daughter should be hanged. Quickly send some one to the prison."

Albany said : "Run, run, O run !"

Goneril killed herself and Regan died by the poisoning. The dead bodies of the two sisters were brought. Albany could not stand the sight. He cried out : "Cover their faces."

Edgar rushed to the prison and found that Cordelia had been already hanged. Lear was brought, with the dead Cordelia in his arms.

Lear cried out :

"Howl, howl, howl, howl ! O, you are men of stones. She is gone for ever !"

Kent knelt before him and said : "O my good master !"

Lear said : "I pray you, away."

Edgar said : "It is noble Kent, your friend."

Lear cried out : "A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all ! I might have saved her, now she is gone for ever !"

"Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha ! What is it you say ? She speaks but I cannot hear what she says. Her voice was ever soft, gentle, and low. That is an excellent thing in a woman. I killed the slave who was hanging him."

This was true. The old Lear did kill the man. This was Lear's last kingly act.

Lear then turned to Kent. He said :

"Who are you ? My sight is rather dull. I will tell you straight. Are you not Kent ?"

Kent said : "The same, your servant, Kent. And also your servant, Caius. I have followed your sad steps all along. Your eldest daughters are dead."

Lear said : "Yes, so I thought."

Albany said : "He does not know what he says. It is useless for us to speak to him."

Edgar said : "Yes, quite useless."

News now came that Edmund was dead.

Albany said : "That is a trifle. Who cares for that villain !"

Albany then declared :

"You, lords and noble friends, know our

intention. We give back to His Majesty King Lear the full authority of a king during his life."

He turned to Edgar and Kent and said :

"You get back your rights with other honours that you deserve."

Looking at all, Albany said : "All friends of the king shall receive the reward of their virtue. All enemies of the king will be punished."

Lear cried out : "My poor Cordelia is hanged ! No, no, no, life ! Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life, and you no breath at all ? You will come no more, never, never, never, never ! Do you see this ? She lives. She breathes. Look on her, look, her lips, look there, look there !" Lear imagined that Cordelia was alive. The shock of this joy killed him."

Edgar cried out : "He is gone, indeed."

Kent said : "The wonder is that he lasted so long."

Albany said to Kent and Edgar : "Friends of my soul, you two rule in this land."

Kent said : "I have to go. My master calls me and I must not say no."

Edgar said : "But I will have to stay. Some must bear the burden. The oldest have suffered

most. The youngest have done their worst. We must do our best to see that all is not lost."

Meaning of some words and expressions :

Manage—ব্যবস্থা করা, সম্পাদনে কৃতকার্য হওয়া। secret—গোপনীয়। information—খবর, সংবাদ। report—সংবাদ প্রদান করা, বিবৃত করা। pluck out—উৎপাটিত করা। ungrateful—অকৃতজ্ঞ। comfortless—সুখহীন, স্বস্তিহীন। mockingly—বিদ্রূপ বা উপহাস করিয়া। villain—দুরাত্মা, দুর্জন। treachery—বিশ্বাসঘাতকতা। folly—নির্বুদ্ধিতা, মূর্খতা। prosper—সৌভাগ্যশালী হওয়া, সফল হওয়া। mental—মানসিক। vision—দৃষ্টি। tenant—প্রজা। playful—খেলায় রত, ক্রীড়াসক্ত। passion—আসক্তি বা অনুরাগ। disgust—বিতৃষ্ণ বা বিরক্ত হওয়া। messenger—সংবাদ-বাহক। troops—সৈন্যবাহিনী। contrast—বৈসাদৃশ্য, প্রভেদ। brink—পার্শ্বদেশ, কিনারা। knock down—ভূমিসাৎ করা। union—মিলন, যোগাযোগ। defeat—পরাজয়। sacrifice—উৎসর্গ। gilded—মুখোস পরা। worship—অর্চনা করা। serpent—সর্প। charges—অভিযোগ সমূহ। challenge—যুদ্ধার্থ আহ্বান করা। rush—ছুটিয়া যাওয়া। plague—'দুরারোগ্য ব্যাধি হউক' বা 'মহাকষ্টে নিপতিত হও' ইত্যাদি অভিশাপ বিশেষ। useless—বৃথা। declare—ঘোষণা করা। intention—উদ্দেশ্য। imagine—অনুভব করা বা বোধ করা। lasted—জীবিত ছিল।

Exercises

I. *Answer these questions in complete sentences :*

(*a*) What did Cordelia do when she got secret information from Kent ?

(*b*) How was Gloucester treated by Regan and Cornwall ?

(*c*) Why was Lear filled with shame when he understood that Cordelia was close to him ?

(*d*) How could Edgar save Gloucester's life ?

(*e*) What did Lear say when Cordelia requested him to bless her ?

(*f*) What was the cause of Gloucester's death ?

(*g*) What did Cordelia say when her army was defeated by that of Goneril and Regan ?

(*h*) What did Albany declare when the news of Edmund's death came ?

(*i*) How did Lear die ?

(*j*) What did Edgar say at last ?

II. *Put these phrases rightly in the blank spaces of sentences :*

give out ; pluck out ; jump down ; knocked down ; bear with ; knelt down.

(*a*) — — his eyes.

(*b*) Edmund thought that he would — — the secret to Cornwall.

(*c*) Gloucester intended to — — and die.

(*d*) Gloucester — — and prayed to the gods.

(*e*) Oswald and Edgar fought and Edgar — Oswald —.

(*f*) Lear said : "You must — — me."

III. *Complete these sentences :*

(*a*) The younger rise when the old —.

(*b*) Regan said : "Hang him at —."

(*c*) The moment Gloucester lost his physical eyes, gained his mental —.
(*d*) We are to the gods as flies are to playful —.
(*e*) His heart burst and he died with a smile on his —.
(*f*) We two will sing like birds in the —.
(*g*) She ran away in —.
(*h*) She is gone for —.
(*i*) I have followed your sad steps all —.

IV. *Fill in each blank space with the right word from the brackets* :

(*a*) Cornwall was highly pleased — Edmund. (to, with)
(*b*) It was Edmund who informed us — your treachery. (about, of)
(*c*) Edmund, take revenge — this cruel act. (for, on)
(*d*) They kill us — their sport. (from, for)
(*e*) He had reminded him — his son Edgar. (about, of)
(*f*) Albany was disgusted — the daughter's cruelty to their father. (for, with)
(*g*) He felt the contrast — her and her wicked sisters. (between, among)
(*h*) He took Gloucester — the arm and led him on. (by, with)
(*i*) Your sisters have done me wrong — any cause. (for, without)
(*j*) I had risen — the top. (at, to)
(*k*) Goneril killed herself and Regan died — the poisoning. (with, by)